

Grant Continuation Report from Task Force

Recommendation: Forward with recommendation to reduce the number of minimum time positions from requested 12 to 9 based on enrollment/retention performance. This results in a recommended \$9120 reduction (0.636 MSY) in funding request from \$283,768 to \$274,648. It should be noted the program underspent the grant funds by \$102,478 in the year that ended August 2018. Performance measure targets should be revisited after the initial report for year 2 and adjusted to reflect what is actually possible given the nature of this service.

A condition of the recommendation for funding is the program must submit for review its plan to increase retention to 85% from current 45% and a recruitment plan that will result in a significantly improved enrollment rate (last year 59.5%). The task force also would like to hear from senior management how it plans to stabilize program staffing (2 directors in 12 months), ensure financial is timely, and what administrative support is available in the agency to manage program records in a timely manner. Data in reports that has been flagged by staff as questionable needs to be verified by program.

Legal Applicant: Healthy Acadia

Program Name: AmeriCorps Recovery Corps

Category: ☐ AC Formula
☒ AC Competitive
☐ Other Competition

Type: ☐ Planning
☒ Operating
☐ Fixed Price
☐ Ed Award Only

Year in Grant Cycle: ☐ Year 1 ☐ Year 2 ☒ Year 3

Continuation Dates: 9/1/2020 to 8/31/2021

New Resources Requested for Continuation: Funds and Slots

	CNCS	Local Share	% change from 2019 year ↓14% ↑ 03% ↑13% - increase all on match					
Operating	38,588	201,400						
Member Support	231,000	87,709						
Indirect (Admin)	14,180	65,625						
% sharing proposed	44%	56%						
% share required	70%	30%						
Cost-per-member proposed (max allowed)	\$14,339							
Total AmeriCorps Member Service Years:		Slot Types Requested						
		1700	1200	900	675	450	300	Total
		13	5	3			12	20.54

Program Description (executive summary from grant application):

Healthy Acadia proposes to have 30 AmeriCorps Recovery Corps Members who will serve as Recovery Coaches in the northern rural Maine counties of Aroostook, Hancock, Knox, Penobscot, Waldo, and Washington. At the end of the first program year, the Recovery Corps members will be responsible for serving at least 400 people experiencing opioid use disorder through peer recovery coaching and increasing education and awareness about recovery coaching and the recovery process. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will leverage at least 60 volunteers who will be engaged in recovery coaching. This program will concentrate on the CNCS focus area of Healthy Futures - Opioid Abuse. The CNCS investment of \$283,768 will be matched with \$365,839; \$141,000 in public funding and \$224,839 in private funding.

Service locations (new sites are italicized):

- AMHC - Downeast Community Partners
- AMHC - Downeast Treatment Center
- WC Recovery Centers
- Acadia Family Center
- Aroostook Community Action Program
- Bucksport Regional Health Center
- East Grand Health Center
- Health Equity Alliance
- Healthy Acadia
- Maine Coast Regional Reentry Center
- Mid Coast Recovery Coalition
- Pleasant Point Health Center
- Together Place
- Wabanaki Health and Wellness
- Your Place / HEAL – Ellsworth

Performance measures (targets and achievement for the completed first year; second targets are the same as first but initial report of actual isn't due until Jan 2020; targets proposed below are for third year):

	Prior Year Target	Actual Accomplishment	Proposed Target
» Opioid / Drug Use Recovery:			
<u>Number of individuals engaging in recovery coach services</u>	400	133	400
<u>Number of individuals that experience at least 30 days of uninterrupted recovery</u>	240	92	
<u>Number of individuals that experience improved community-based recovery capital</u>	320	62	320
» Capacity building ¹			
<u>Number of additional activities completed and/or program outputs produced by the program</u>	60	50	TBD
<u>Number of community volunteers recruited by organizations or participants</u>	60	90	TBD
<u>Hours of service contributed by community volunteers who were recruited</u>	3,120	633	TBD
» AmeriCorps Member Development ¹			
Six trainings offered to members	6	17	
*30 members increase knowledge and skills	30	63	

*this reporting clarification since they did not actually have 30 members

¹CNCS does not allow programs to enter these performance measures in federal application system. VM staff will negotiate with program before award is made at state level.

Operating performance summary:

Enrollment/retention.

- Enrollment for 900-hour positions has been very low, out of 14 available slots, they filled 2 (14.3% of their slots filled), for full time positions they had 100% enrollment 11 slots were filled, and for the 300-hour positions, 9 out of 12 positions were filled (75% of the slots filled).
- Recruitment has been approached on a service term basis, meaning that the Program Director will recruit for the 1700-hour position and then the 1200- & 900-hour positions. The strategy of recruitment has been improving as there is more of an effort, however the recruitment efforts happen very late in the year, leaving limited time for screening applicants, doing thorough interviews and background checks. In the first year the RecoveryCorps program relied on the Sites to provide them with ideal candidates for AmeriCorps positions.
- Retention has been very low overall, with an average at 45.5%. The breakdown is: for the 11 Full-time

(1700 hr.) slots they retained 4, (36.4%); for the Half-time (900 hr.) positions they did not retain any members (0%); and for the Minimum time (300 hr.) positions they retained 6 members (66.7%) Retention reflects the number of members that successfully completed their term of service and exit with their education award.

- The program struggles with all three aspects (enrollment, recruitment and retention) in some way.
- Reduce volunteers to a more manageable number to focus on Improving internal culture and ultimately recruitment, retention and enrollment.

Compliance:

Program operation

- The program has had an issue with timely submission of necessary documentation.
- Communication between critical program staff that concerns the RecoveryCorps (AmeriCorps program) needs to be improved.
- Site agreements and site supervisor management needs some concentrated attention. Site supervisors were not fully aware of what would be expected of them when they opted to host a member.
- Healthy Acadia gets media attention for their Recovery program and the program has been represented quite well.

Member management

- They do well with documenting what it is that the members are doing, the training that they participate in, and the service that they are providing. They need to improve how the members document time.
- Background checks were improved with the re-check authorized. It is still unclear whether the program has established a policy (as discussed with them) regarding criteria for serving in the program. The people who they want to engage as AmeriCorps members are likely to have had law enforcement contact.
- A thorough checklist was created by the Program Director to ensure compliance with required documentation.

Financial.

- The Finance director was repeatedly contacted concerning financial reporting regarding late monthly/ quarterly reports etc. and reimbursement requests.
- The Finance Director under-reported on Supervisory hours due to late submission, which is skewing the AmeriCorps/Grantee share.
- The program did not spend down their funds and were slightly low on match (contracted rate 46.32%; actual 44.81%).

Other factors:

Sustainability: Healthy Acadia's AmeriCorps program is in the process of securing new sites for recovery coaches as far as Lubec and Houlton. New partnerships with Community based hospitals throughout Hancock, Aroostook, and Knox counties are also in the works as the hospitals expressed interest in having members placed there as Recovery Coaches.

Community Awareness: Healthy Acadia's RecoveryCorps program receives a lot of media attention. One member has appeared regularly in the ongoing series on WAGM T.V. called 'Intervention – Aroostook,' which is a great tool for recruiting aspiring recovery coaches, as well as raising awareness about the issue and challenge of recovery.

Other comments: Two sites where there were AmeriCorps members placed this past year, hired on three of the members that were placed there.

Task Force Review Summary:

Task Force Continuation Recommendation	Authorize Proposal	Modify: Increase	Modify: Decrease	Deny Request
Budget			X	
AmeriCorps MSYs and slots			X	
Performance targets		X	X	
Operating plans	X			

Comments:

- Reduce volunteers to a more manageable number to focus on Improving internal culture and ultimately recruitment, retention and enrollment.
- Wanted to check both increase and decrease given that they significantly exceeded the volunteer target but fell far short of the volunteer hours.
- Fell short on individuals served, # w. at least 30 days of uninterrupted recovery; # with improved community-based recovery capital. In part, this likely reflects recruitment and retention shortfalls. If MSYs are reduced, these targets should likewise be reduced.
- In terms of adding new locations and partnerships, do they now have experience in partnership agreements and do staff believe these additions are appropriate? Should some locations be dropped.
- Clearly, there are some compliance and reporting issues that must be addressed going forward. I would also like to see them produce a recruitment and retention plan.